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Millions in it



Edwin Bateman Morris

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MILLIONS IN IT

A Farce Comedy in One Act

BY

EDWIN BATEMAN MORRIS

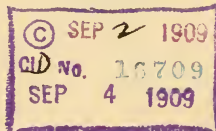
Author of "The FRESHMAN" and "THE MAN
NEXT DOOR"



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CHARACTERS

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| OLMSTEIN, | } | <i>of the firm of Olmstein & Weissen-</i> |
| WEISSENPIMPFEL, | | |
| PINGLE, | | <i>pimpfel, Architects.</i> |
| HON. JOHN BROWN, | | <i>a Christian Scientist plumber.</i> |
| BEN, | | <i>a client.</i> |
| HELEN AUGUSTA WIND, | | <i>a messenger.</i> |
| | | <i>millionairess.</i> |

TIME OF PLAYING : Forty-five minutes.

COSTUMES

OLMSTEIN and WEISSENPIMPFEL are dressed in typical Hebrew or German burlesque style. OLMSTEIN wears a great deal of flashy jewelry, and clothes of pronounced checks, or stripes. If possible, one should be short, the other tall.

PINGLE. Overalls, worn over a fashionable suit. Wears a neat straw hat. Carries kit of tools.

BROWN. Dressed well, but in exaggerated style.

BEN. Colored man, in rough suit or shabby livery.

HELEN. Expensively dressed, in fact, evidently overdressed. Wears large hat and much jewelry. This part may easily be played by a man.

PROPERTIES

Tools for PINGLE ; watch, lemon, call-bell, paper, pens, and ink, check-book, peanut, bandage for BEN, letter, one-dollar bill.

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SCENE.—*Office of Olmstein and Weissenpimpfel. Plain, boxed interior. Down R., desk and chairs. Up R. and L., drawing-tables and high stools. Plans and pictures of buildings on walls; also one or two "T-squares" and other drawing instruments. Telephone on wall or on one of the desks. Door, C. WEISSENPIMPFEL at telephone.*

WEISSEN. Hello.....Yes.....Who?.....Mrs. Binglestein?.....Oh, wie gates.....Vat, the pipe in the cellar busted?.....Oh, mein goodness, you don't mention it.—Olmstein, the pipe in Mrs. Binglestein's cellar is busted and the water is all running out on the floor. It vill all be wasted. Vat shall I tell her to do?

OLMSTEIN. Tell her to put on her overshoes.

WEISSEN. (*in 'phone*). It's rising a foot every minute? —Oh, pickles, vat shall I do, Olmstein?

OLMSTEIN. Tell her to wait until it gets as high as the cellar windows and then it will run out into the street.

WEISSEN. Oh, you ain't got no practicalness, Olmstein. (*In 'phone.*) Yes, yes.....Oh, I don't knowTake a piece of blotting paper and spread it on the floor, face upward, to absorb the moisture; and I will send a certified plumber to fix it.....Oh, yes, I will get a quick plumber.....This is Wednesday, you know.....He should be there by Friday at the very latest.....Good-bye.—Mein goodness, Olmstein, ain't it awful? Mrs. Binglestein's all alone in the house with a strange tidal wave in the cellar.

OLMSTEIN. It will be worse than the Messina earthquake.

WEISSEN. It will be worse than a mess in her cellar.

(*Enter PINGLE.*)

OLMSTEIN. }
WEISSEN. } Are you a plumber?

PINGLE. No; I'm a Christian Scientist.

OLMSTEIN. Will that work on a hot water pipe?

PINGLE. Sure.

OLMSTEIN. Can you stand in front of a hot water pipe and think, "Dot pipe ain't leaking," and then it ain't leaking?

PINGLE. Sure.

OLMSTEIN. How much will you charge to think that a pipe at 1784 Washington Street ain't leaking?

PINGLE. How big a pipe?

OLMSTEIN. Two inches. It has a tiny puncture in it four inches square, from which bursts forth one foot of water per minute.

PINGLE. That will be twenty-five dollars.

OLMSTEIN. }
WEISSEN. } Twenty-five dollars!! (*They fall right and left, against desks.*)

WEISSEN. Ain't you a real plumber, mister?

PINGLE. That's my price. And I must be sent up in a taxicab.

WEISSEN. That settles it; he ain't no Christian Scientist, he's a real plumber.

OLMSTEIN. Say, Christian Scientist, this ain't no afternoon tea. You're going to fix a water-pipe in a cellar, you know.

PINGLE. Well, if you aren't talking business, I must be going.

OLMSTEIN. Wait, now, wait. Don't be unsociable. You'll get your cab all right. Weissenpimpfel, call 'em up,—the garbage.

WEISSEN. Hello.....Give me the garbage.....The garbage.....The place where they keep the intoxicated cabsHello, garbage, I want one of those quick wagonsThe water in Mrs. Binglestein's cellar is as high up as the preserved quinces.....If you don't hurry it will get to the lemons and will get them.....Olmstein and Weissenpimpfel,—quick.

PINGLE. And I'll want that cab to bring me back, too.

WEISSEN. Oh, certainly. And then we'll buy you a fur overcoat and a diamond stick-pin and have a box party for you in the evening. We always try to make our plumbers feel at home.

OLMSTEIN. Say, look here; how do we know you're a Christian Scientist?

PINGLE. I show you the sign. (*Gives sign.*)

WEISSEN. What's that mean?

OLMSTEIN. Oh, Weissenpimpfel, don't you be so dumb. Your head is solid skull above your nose. Didn't he say he was a Christian Sign-it-is. Well, when he holds up his hand, that's a sign-it-is.

PINGLE. Yes; when I say, "You have a pain in your ear," and hold up my hand, that's a sign it is.

WEISSEN. (*holding ear*). Oh, Olmstein, I got twoberculosis in my ear. Make him stop it.

OLMSTEIN. See here, you take both them burculoses out of his ear.

PINGLE. Your ear doesn't hurt you; you just think it does.

WEISSEN. By Jove, that's true. Ain't that funny? I guess I'll try it. (*PINGLE is meanwhile laughing with OLMSTEIN. WEISSEN. takes PINGLE's watch and holds it up in his hand.*) You didn't wear any watch to-day.

PINGLE. No, I wore a lemon.

(*WEISSEN., who has hidden the watch, unobserved, now shows a lemon in his hand.*)

(*Enter BEN.*)

BEN. Taxicab's here, suh.

PINGLE. All right. Good-bye. Be back in a while.

(*Exit.*)

OLMSTEIN. Ben, attention. Now comes it. I'm a Christian Scientist. (*Holds up hand.*) You got a pain in your eye.

BEN. No, suh.

WEISSEN. Don't put a pain in his eye; he can see through that; try his ear.

OLMSTEIN (*holding up hand*). You got a pain in your ear.

WEISSEN. That fixed him.

BEN. Yas, suh; I done had de misery in my ear for three-four days, suh. I was going to ask you to get off this afternoon to —

OLMSTEIN. Nothing doing. You ain't got no pain in your ear. You only think you have.

BEN. Yas, suh.

OLMSTEIN. That will do.

BEN. There's another gentleman down-stairs wants to see you.

OLMSTEIN. Is he selling anything?

BEN. No, suh; he's a real gentleman.

OLMSTEIN. Show him up. (*Exit BEN.*) Now, Weissenpimpfel, if this is a client, you act like a gentleman, see.

WEISSEN. How do you did it?

OLMSTEIN. Why, acting like a gentleman is, first you button your coat all the way down in front like this,—and then you put your liddle finger in the left hand first story pocket of your coat, and transfer your right hand foot across your left hand foot, and stand at graceful ease.

WEISSEN. (*looking around*). Where is that?

OLMSTEIN. And stand at graceful ease with your right hand foot gently poised on the toe.

WEISSEN. With the right hand foot gently poisoned on the toe.

OLMSTEIN. Not poisoned.

WEISSEN. Positioned, I mean.

OLMSTEIN. That's better, and then you shake hands and make some pleasant remark.

WEISSEN. Pleasant remark?

OLMSTEIN. Yes, and after that keep quiet.

WEISSEN. Yes.

OLMSTEIN. What we want to do is to impress him with the fact that we are doing him a favor by taking his work.

(*Enter BROWN.*)

BROWN. Is this Mr. Olmstein?

OLMSTEIN. I have that pleasure.

BROWN. My name is Hon. John Brown.

OLMSTEIN. How do you do, Mr. Brown? This is my confederate, Mr. Weissenpimpfel.

(*WEISSEN. crosses one foot over other.*)

BROWN. How do you do?

OLMSTEIN (*to WEISSEN.*). Can't you shake hands?

WEISSEN. How do I get to him?

OLMSTEIN. Hurry up.

WEISSEN. Can I hop over to him?

OLMSTEIN. Untie your feet and hurry.

WEISSEN. Is this the place to say something pleasant?

OLMSTEIN. Yes.

WEISSEN. (*shaking hands with BROWN*). Last week when my mother-in-law died ——

OLMSTEIN. You be quiet. Make a noise like a deaf and dumb man. See! (*To BROWN*.) Now, sir, what can I do for you?

BROWN. I want to employ you as my architects.

OLMSTEIN (*aside*). Gee, a client. That is a regular John D. Rockefeller, I can see that. I bet you, I tell you what I bet you, I bet you he gives us a three hundred thousand dollar job.

WEISSEN. I von't bet you; I ain't got no money.

OLMSTEIN. Now, let's see, how much money do you wish to spend, Mr. Brown?

BROWN. Five thousand dollars.

(*WEISSEN. collapses.*)

OLMSTEIN. Five hundred thousand dollars?

BROWN. Five thousand dollars.

(*WEISSEN. sits down at desk and writes. OLMSTEIN does same.*)

OLMSTEIN (*turning to BROWN*). You will have to speak a little louder; I can't hear such small sums.

BROWN (*yelling*). I say I only desire to spend five thousand dollars.

OLMSTEIN (*striking bell*). Of course, you understand, Mr. Brown, that we couldn't think of handling such a little bit of a commission. We are in this business to make money. (*Enter BEN.*) Show this gentleman out and put him on the car for —— (*Names some small place near by.*)

BROWN. I'll make it ten thousand dollars. (*OLMSTEIN and WEISSEN. keep on writing. Pause.*) Twenty thousand dollars. (*Pause.*) Forty thousand dollars.

(*Exit BEN.*)

WEISSEN. Now listen to me.

OLMSTEIN (*to WEISSEN*). Don't talk about it; think it, sit down and write it to yourself on a letter, but keep quiet. This is a matter vot requires the greatest delicacy. (*To BROWN*.) Mr. Brown, me and my colleague architectures

only buildings for the very rich, the cream of the cream, the quintessence of social eminence. A forty thousand dollar job is a mere gallon and a half in the bucket to us. The mere fact that you have us design you a building insures you of admittance to the houses of the very best families in the city.

BROWN. What is the smallest commission you will take?

OLMSTEIN. One hundred thousand dollars. Pay Mr. Weissenpimpfel.

BROWN. But I don't pay the architects.

OLMSTEIN. Yes, you give us the money, and we give you the building. Just make out the check on Mr. Weissenpimpfel's desk.

(WEISSEN. *rises*. BROWN *sits down and writes check*.)

BROWN. There you are, sir.

OLMSTEIN. Good. Now that's fifty thousand dollars for the architects' fee, and fifty thousand dollars for the building. Now what kind of an oil refinery do you want?

BROWN. I don't want a refinery at all.

OLMSTEIN. Oh, yes, oil refineries are all the rage. All the fashionable people are building them. Besides, we don't know how to design anything else. So drop in next Thursday and we will show you the premeditated sketches for the nicest little refinery you ever saw. (*Strikes bell*.)

BROWN. But, sir, I don't —

OLMSTEIN. That's all right, sir; always glad to make suggestions; we are here to tell you what you want. (*Enter BEN*.) Show Mr. Brown out and call a taxicab. Next Thursday, Mr. Brown, we'll have the refinery all designed for you, with hot and cold oil on every floor.

(*Exeunt BEN and BROWN*.)

WEISSEN. Oh, gee, ain't that easy?

OLMSTEIN. Now we will divide the money equally. How much will a hundred thousand dollar building cost? I think thirty-five thousand dollars is a-plenty. That divides the money equally between me and you and Mr. Brown. Thirty-five thousand to Brown, thirty-five thousand to me, and the remainder to you.

WEISSEN. I don't see that.

OLMSTEIN. Now, listen; thirty-five and thirty-five is

sixty-five and sixty-five from one hundred is thirty-five. That gives you thirty-five thousand dollars.

(*Enter HELEN AUGUSTA WIND.*)

HELEN. Is Mr. Brown here?

WEISSEN. (*aside*). Do you know this woman, Olmstein?

OLMSTEIN. No. She thinks it's a manicure parlor, I guess.

WEISSEN. Now, who are you?

HELEN. Hush, man, hush. Your idle prattle annoys me. Where is Mr. Brown?

WEISSEN. Madam, I repeat, who are you?

HELEN. I? I, sir, am Helen Augusta Wind, the richest woman in the world. I have thirty million quarts of diamonds at my home in my upper left-hand bureau drawer. Down in the street is a fifty-foot automobile with nine chauffeurs, dining-room, smoking-room, public stenographer and marble shower bath. If my income were sent me in dollars as fast as it accumulates, in thirteen minutes this room would be three feet deep in dollar bills. Now, is my uncle, Mr. Brown, here?

WEISSEN. (*handing her a chair*). Won't you be seated? Mr. Brown is not here just now, but he may return any time; (*aside*) especially next Thursday.

OLMSTEIN (*drawing card from pocket*). My card; architects and engineers; high office buildings a specialty, country estates our delight; drop in and see us.

HELEN. Thank you.

OLMSTEIN (*to WEISSEN*). Well, here is three hundred and fifty million dollars waiting around to be married.

WEISSEN. Let's do it.

OLMSTEIN. Assurability.

WEISSEN. }
OLMSTEIN } (*speaking together, to HELEN. They make the same gestures. This requires careful rehearsal, but is very funny if well done*). Madam, we have fallen comperfectly and absotively in love mid the wonderful charm and beauty of yourself and your money. We would therefore respectfully suggest that you ignite in the bums of wedlock mid either me or my partner or both of us, as may suit your fancy or indication. In any case the gate receipts are to be divisioned according to the rules of the American championship series, sixty percentage going

to the winner and forty percentage to the loser. Hoping to have a favorable reply as soon as possible, we remain yours very respectfully, Olmstein and Weissenpimpfel.

HELEN. Gentlemen, replying to yours of even date, I accept your proposition.

WEISSEN. } (*speaking to each other*). Dot means me.
 OLMSTEIN }
 WEISSEN. Let's ask her.

OLMSTEIN } (*together. They both make same gestures,*
 WEISSEN. } (*while speaking, as before*). Honored madam, referring to your favor of to-day accepting our proposition of mutual affection and steam, we wish to inquire with all respect and differentiation, which one you mean.

HELEN. It is immaterial. You must decide.

OLMSTEIN. I have it; we will eat a philopena, and the first one that takes anything from the other loses.

WEISSEN. I have one objection to make, that is scarlet fever and mumps; you can't help taking those sometimes.

OLMSTEIN. All right.

(*He takes peanut from pocket, breaks it, and offers half to*
 WEISSEN. *They hook arms and eat.*)

(*Enter BEN. He has a bandage on his ear.*)

BEN. Mr. Pingle to see you, sir.

HELEN. I must go.

OLMSTEIN } (*together*). We will escort you to the door
 WEISSEN. } and call a cab.

(*Exeunt OLMSTEIN, WEISSEN. and HELEN.*)

(*Exit BEN and reënter with PINGLE.*)

BEN. Did you get the pipe fixed at Mrs. Binglestein's?

PINGLE. Sure, I told her I was the water inspector, and if she didn't instantly send out for a plumber and fix the pipe, I'd have her arrested. And she did. What's the matter with your ear? Olmstein been trying Christian Science on it?

BEN. No, suh. You see, it was my wife. She said she was too handsome to work. And I said that she weren't handsome. She was so ugly she couldn't work nor nothing

around her, not even the clock. And when I got out of the hospital —

PINGLE. Hospital?

BEN. Yaas, suh; you see, she done had a flat-iron in her hand while she was talking and she got so excited she let it fall out, and it hit me on the head.

PINGLE. I see. Did you retaliate?

BEN. Tally eight? No, suh, she scored one.

PINGLE. Did you strike her in return, I say?

BEN. No, suh, I swapped a coal-scuttle for her flat-iron. But she was too delicate to be real rough with. She only weighed 346 pounds. Besides, I loved her.

(*Enter WEISSEN. and OLMSTEIN.*)

WEISSEN. Well, Christian Scientist, did you get it fixed?

PINGLE. Sure.

WEISSEN. Fine, fine. Ain't it wonderful, Olmstein, this Christian Sign-it-is?

OLMSTEIN. Say, Christian Scientist, will you do a little favor for us, free of charge?

PINGLE. What is it?

OLMSTEIN. There is a young lady just left here. She is about half-way down-town by now. Will you do the sign and make her turn around and come back?

PINGLE. Certainly. (*Makes sign.*) That's all right. She'll be here. Anything else?

OLMSTEIN. That's all. Good-bye.

PINGLE. How about my twenty-five dollars?

OLMSTEIN. Here it is. Weissenpimpfel, you give it to him.

WEISSEN. Then you will say, "Philopena." I'm watching you, Olmstein.

PINGLE (*taking check from OLMSTEIN*). Thank you. Good-bye.

WEISSEN. }
OLMSTEIN. } Good-bye.

(*Exeunt PINGLE and BEN.*)

WEISSEN. Read that letter, Olmstein, and tell me what you think of it.

(*OLMSTEIN takes it with a pair of tongs.*)

OLMSTEIN (*reading letter*). Tell him to wait till the first of the month.

WEISSEN. (*receiving letter on a plate*). I suppose you think the fair Helen has a preference for you?

OLMSTEIN. I give her credit for good sense.

WEISSEN. Do you mean that I am not as good-looking as you?

OLMSTEIN. You ain't got the figure, man. You are lean, like a clothes prop. See how round I am; I am round—why, I am so round I am almost spherical.

(*These lines may be altered to suit person taking the part.*)

WEISSEN. Oh, that's nothing. You take all good-looking men——

OLMSTEIN. No, I won't take nothing. You will say philopena. I am watching you, Weissenpimpfel.

WEISSEN. All good-looking men are thin.

OLMSTEIN. You haven't the ease of manner I have. You haven't mangled with cultiwated society like I have.

WEISSEN. I don't want to mangle with colored waiter society.

OLMSTEIN. Cultiwated; not colored waiter.

WEISSEN. Well, whatever it is, I don't want it.

OLMSTEIN. Why, cultiwated society is the most beautiful thing in the world. I give you my word, Weissenpimpfel.

WEISSEN. I won't take it; I am watching you, Olmstein.

OLMSTEIN. You ought to get into society.

WEISSEN. No; when I marry Helen Augusta Wind I will have plenty of it. I will go down the avenue with my pockets stuffed with ten dollar bills, and when I come to a blind man on the street corner I will just pull out a bill and hand it to him.

(*Offers bill to OLMSTEIN.*)

OLMSTEIN. No, Weissenpimpfel; I may be blind, but I can see that's only a one, with my eyes shut.

(*Enter HELEN.*)

WEISSEN. }
OLMSTEIN } (*together*). Our adorable Helen. You did
come back.

HELEN. My frenzied financees. I forgot something. I don't remember what it was, though.

OLMSTEIN }
WEISSEN. } (*gesturing together*). It has been so lengthy since we have seen you, since we have inhaled the soft fragrance of your dollar bills. What has our sweetness been doing?

HELEN. I sat right still, and earned two million dollars.

WEISSEN. Sit right here and let me see your income come in. (*Sits on lap.*) Now, every time the clock ticks, that's a thousand more. Gee, what an easy way to make money.

OLMSTEIN. Say, Weissenpimpfel, that is not fair. It ain't according to the agreement. She can't sit on your knees while she gets richer; I want my turn.

WEISSEN. Here, take her. Good-bye, sweetness.

(*Puts her on OLMSTEIN's lap.*)

OLMSTEIN. Thanks.

WEISSEN. Philopena.

OLMSTEIN. Oh, Himmel, what have I done?

WEISSEN. I guess you get the green grape-fruit this time.

OLMSTEIN. I hate you, Weissenpimpfel; I will no more be in the office wid you.

WEISSEN. Mrs. Weissenpimpfel will. Come, Helen, let's go and examine the bins of twenty dollar gold pieces.

(*Exeunt WEISSEN. and HELEN.*)

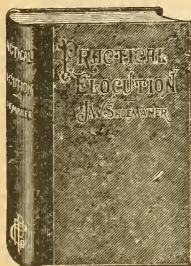
OLMSTEIN. Lost; all but forty per cent. (*Enter BEN.*) Ben, I have suffered a great loss. I am in mourning; follow me around; I must have something black around me.

BEN. Yas, suh.

CURTAIN



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